

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5173

As Amended by House, March 30, 2009

Title: An act relating to honorary doctorate degrees.

Brief Description: Authorizing the regional universities to confer honorary doctorate degrees.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Fairley, Kastama, Sheldon, McAuliffe, Brown, Pridemore, Delvin, Hobbs, McDermott, Jarrett, Kilmer, Jacobsen and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/24/09 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/12/09, 47-0.

Passed House: 3/30/09, 96-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kilmer, Chair; Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Hewitt, Jacobsen, Jarrett, Kastama, McAuliffe, Pflug, Shin and Stevens.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Central Washington University (CWU), Eastern Washington University (EWU), Western Washington University (WWU), and The Evergreen State College are authorized to confer honorary bachelor's and master's degrees upon persons other than graduates of their universities in recognition of the person's learning or devotion to education, literature, art, or science. Washington State University and the University of Washington may also confer honorary degrees without restriction as to level. Community and technical colleges are authorized to confer honorary associate of arts degrees.

Summary of Bill: WWU, CWU, and EWU are authorized to confer honorary doctoral degrees upon persons other than graduates in recognition of the person's learning or devotion to education, literature, art, or science.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Having this capability will help the regional universities build relationships and develop institutional resources. The bill has no fiscal impact, but it will have a positive impact on campus. The regional universities will use this judiciously.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Sherry Burkey, WWU; Steve DuPont, graduate, CWU; David Buri, EWU.

House Amendment(s): The restriction that honorary degrees may only be granted to persons who did not graduate from the institution granting the honorary degree is removed for Eastern Washington University, Central Washington University, and Western Washington University.